

7413

339

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U.S.C. Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

COUNTRY	Austria/USSR	REPORT NO.		50X1
SUBJECT	Soviet Army Morale Factors	DATE DISTR.	12 December 1955	
	50X1	NO. OF PAGES	7	
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.		50X1
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES		
DATE ACQUIRED				

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE

50X1	Attached is		received	
50X1				
50X1				
50X1				
50X1				

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

STATE	#x	ARMY	#x	NAVY	#x	AIR	#x	FBI		AEC		USIA	x		
(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)															

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT

50X1

COUNTRY USSR/Austria 50X1

DATE DISTR. 13 Oct. 1955

SUBJECT Soviet Morale Factors 50X1

NO. OF PAGES 6

DATE OF INFORMATION

REFERENCES:

PLACE ACQUIRED

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION
50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

50X1

SOVIET MORALE FACTORS

.. MORALE FACTORS

1. Dependents

50X1 [redacted] any officer stationed in Austria
 50X1 was permitted to have his dependents with him. About 90 percent of
 50X1 the officers [redacted] had their dependents living with them.
 50X1 The junior officers and their families lived in several officers'
 50X1 dormitories in the 290th Gds Rifle Regt caserne. The senior regi-
 50X1 mental officers and their families lived in four officers' dormitories
 50X1 about one-half km outside the caserne.

50X1 [redacted] none of the families had been required to return to the
 50X1 USSR following the Austrian peace talks. However, most of the
 dependents had gone on a buying spree in anticipation of impending
 departure.

No conscript personnel or reenlistees were permitted to have depen-
 dents at their place of duty.

2. Freedom of Movement: Passes

Conscript personnel were not permitted to leave the caserne except
 on official duty. Certain conscript personnel such as mailmen and
 supply personnel were allowed to come and go in the course of their
 official duties; and other conscript personnel were allowed to leave
 the caserne during alert periods to rouse unit officers living just
 outside the caserne. To enforce this policy as well as to protect
 it against illegal entry, the 290th Gds Rifle Regt caserne was sur-
 rounded by a two foot high wooden fence. The two exits to the caserne
 were also constantly guarded.

Officers and reenlistees were permitted to leave the caserne after
 duty hours without showing any documents. They were permitted to
 go to MAUER OEHLING to make purchases. However, no one was permitted
 to frequent any drinking establishments. Officers were told to do
 their drinking in their quarters, and officers living outside the
 caserne were not supposed to wander about the countryside during
 their off-duty hours, except for approved reasons such as hunting
 or fishing.

Supply and housekeeping vehicles were permitted to freely enter and
 leave the caserne without officer escort. Line vehicles, on the
 other hand, could leave the caserne only with the proper trip ticket
 and with an officer escort.

Since conscript personnel were never legally allowed to leave the
 caserne except for official duties, most of the conscripts went over
 the fence when they would not be missed. Generally speaking, the
 very strict schedule accounted for the conscripts' whereabouts almost
 every minute of the day. However, many of them did go over the fence
 after 2200 hours and remained absent until 2400, when a mandatory
 taps formation was held. After this formation, many went over the
 fence again until the next mandatory formation at 0700 the following
 morning. Most of the charges of quarters covered for the missing
 conscripts, but sometimes the officer of the day or a unit officer
 made a check.

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

-3-

As a result the AWOL culprit usually spent a week or two in the regimental guardhouse.

Most of the men on their first year of duty abided by the restrictions, but [redacted] about 10 men of the second and third-year troops were AWOL each night during these hours. [redacted] about 10 percent of the regiment's conscripts could be expected to be AWOL on any one night. Some of these men often took their weapons with them and plundered and pillaged during these night excursions. [redacted] every Austrian store within a 10-kilometer radius had been broken into at least once.

Three men [redacted] were notorious bandits during these nightly excursions. [redacted]

This gang had once waylaid an unidentified Italian delegation on the LINZ-VIENNA highway. Though a loud protest was registered, these men were never apprehended or punished. On another occasion this same group bombed and wrecked a Catholic church in the ALLENTSTEIG training area. The Austrians protested bitterly but the culprits were not apprehended. [redacted] this gang also broke into several Gasthaeuser (taverns) and plundered everything in sight.

3. Leave Policies

[redacted] officers were permitted two months of leave annually exclusive of travel time. [redacted] reenlistees were permitted two months of leave exclusive of travel time once every two years. 1

50X1

The only conscripts allowed leave were those who had exemplary records in the performance of their duties. These personnel were allowed a 10-day period of leave exclusive of travel time. About 10 percent of the conscripts were thus affected. All leave was taken in the USSR. [redacted] about one percent of the regiment was on leave at any one time.

The only compassionate leaves granted were for deaths in the family or family hardship cases. In these cases the Rayvovenkomat determined who was to get a compassionate leave and made all the arrangements. Normally it took a month of administrative action to effect a compassionate leave.

Although the conscripts grumbled about the leave system they felt that there was nothing they could do about these regulations.

4. Factors Bearing on Discipline

a. Arrests and confinements

The regimental guardhouse had an average of 10 prisoners daily, and six prisoners were being held [redacted] All were undergoing punishment for minor military infractions.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

-4-

50X1

No officers were held at the regimental guardhouse. Whenever it was necessary, they were confined at an unidentified guardhouse at division headquarters.

b. Drunkenness

50X1 All the regimental officers drank very heavily, many to the
50X1 point of insensibility. As was stated above, officers were
50X1 encouraged to do their drinking in their quarters.

Conscripts were forbidden to drink, but they all managed to get spirits somehow. Sometimes reenlistees would purchase spirits for them at the regimental PX. Others went over the fence to get spirits at some local Gasthaus. In spite of considerable infractions to the non-drinking order, the usual punishment was only a few days in the guardhouse. If an EM was caught repeatedly, however, he was sometimes returned to the USSR.

c. Venereal Disease

50X1 There were rare instances when new arrivals from the Soviet
50X1 Union had venereal disease. In such cases these men were handled
50X1 through normal medical channels.
50X1 these men were not punished.

d. General State of Discipline

50X1 There were numerous instances
50X1 of individual disobedience of orders, but no collective
50X1 infractions of orders or incidents. Numerous orders were read
50X1 from Division and CGF headquarters enjoining all personnel to
raise their standards of discipline, but these were more or
less routine. Often the Regimental CO censured a particular
unit during a regimental formation. There were often complaints
in local Austrian newspapers about the conduct of Soviet
personnel and about undesirable incidents in which Soviet
personnel had taken part.

There were also isolated incidents of poor discipline among certain individuals, and as a result, about 10 men from the regiment were returned to the USSR annually. The majority of these men were incorrigible. A small number of these had also been returned as a result of fraternizing with the Austrians. A small number of officers were also returned to the USSR for fraternization and for alcoholism.

5. Level of Morale

50X1 The morale was at a low level.
50X1 The main reason for this was the very strict discipline and the
strict training schedule followed by the regiment.

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

-5-

Although the conscripts were dissatisfied with the leave policy, they could not complain openly since "those were the regulations". The conscripts did not exactly resent the privileges enjoyed by officers but they were rankled by the very low pay the Soviet conscript received. Another sore point with conscripts was the poor food, which they openly complained about. Some of them had even found worms in the rations, but since even an official complaint brought no results, they were of the opinion that it was useless to complain. [redacted] a biscuit in [redacted] in the messhall and found it to be wormy. The Regimental CO happened to be in the messhall [redacted]. The Regimental CO merely turned his head and paid no attention. During political lectures the political officers often harped on the good standard of living in the Soviet Union, but the conscripts would ask the officer to explain why some Kolkhoz workers were not getting enough to eat. Allegedly the conscripts often openly accused their unit officers to their faces of speculating and "living like kings" while they, as privates, really suffered. The officers paid no attention to these men, however.

There were few or no complaints concerning clothing and equipment. The only complaint was that during demobilization periods, personnel about to be demobilized had carefully hoarded a set of new clothing in which to be demobilized, but unit officers tried to take these articles away from them and replace them with third category items. It was also common practice for the old-timers about to be demobilized to descend upon new arrivals and trade their old clothing for the newer clothing of the new arrivals.

6. Promotions

[redacted] Concerning promotions among EM, there were no complaints. In fact very few tried to be promoted and they had little interest in whether promotions were available or not.

7. Defections and Anti-Defection Propaganda

[redacted] political officer told [redacted] that deserters to the West would either be shot or returned to the USSR after being debriefed. [redacted]

FRATERNIZATION

Fraternization with Austrians was officially forbidden, but this order was not expressly adhered to. Many of the single officers fraternized and the conscripts fraternized when they went over the caserne fence. This fraternization was not done openly and persons caught at it were usually given unit punishment. Frequent repeated violations usually resulted in return to the USSR.

PROPAGANDA

1. Foreign Broadcasts

It was forbidden for any of the regimental personnel to listen to any foreign broadcasts.

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

-6-

50X1 However, [redacted] Voice of America broadcasts several
50X1 times on one of the regimental RBM-1 radios. Many of the radio
50X1 operators often tuned their military sets to these broadcasts.

50X1 [redacted]
50X1 Those [redacted] personnel who listened to these broadcasts
50X1 did not discuss them since they were afraid of being turned in.

[redacted] Comment 1:

50X1 [redacted]
50X1 The general consensus of opinion [redacted]
50X1 [redacted] is that the leave period
is 30 days plus travel time.

CONFIDENTIAL